

Worksite Wellness Success Stories

May 2007

LEADING BY EXAMPLE - Walking the Talk



HAP - Health Alliance Plan, a southeastern Michigan healthcare provider, has said that a healthier employee is a more productive and happier employee and sponsored A Step by Step Guide to Organizing a Worksite Walking Program.

The program, [*Walk for Better Health*](#), was a self-paced walking program designed to increase physical activity and reduce the risk of chronic disease among your employees. The goal was to walk 10,000 steps (most people walk an average of 5,000 steps) or to engage in 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

"The benefits of walking cannot be understated. Recent studies have shown that moderate walking reduces the risk of heart disease, several types of cancer and osteoporosis. Walking also lowers the "bad" cholesterol, raises the "good" and decreases stress", said HAP.

Early in April 2007, an email went out to worksite wellness committee members announcing that "The first 15 groups to sign up for this program will each receive up to 100 free pedometer! So sign up now to walk for your better health!" The State Office of Retirement Services (ORS) responded immediately.



"It is exciting to see the interest, said Michelle Thompson, an ORS Worksite Wellness committee member. After participating in a brown bag Health and Safety fitness lunch, nearly 80 people (about 50% of ORS employees) put on their walking shoes - were 'on board' to start the **ORS Walking Challenge** on May 29!

Each person that signed up to participate in this fitness endeavor proudly sported their FREE green HAP pedometer for the six-week walking challenge. During the six-week time frame the Health and Safety Team sponsored motivational programs to keep everyone moving; lunch hour group walks, complete with free bottled water, and many more fun tactics!

"A special thank you to the Health and Safety Team for putting this wonderful event together. We'd also like to thank Mila Padgett, Assistant Director, Oakland University, for volunteering her time to speak with staff and hand out the free pedometers", said Thompson.

The ORS Wellness committee has decided to continue the challenge and created "WDRA Walkabouts" Walking Club to help encourage employees to keep moving everyday .

